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Nonsense Pictures and Rhymes By A Solemn College President

President David Starr Jordan, of Stanford University, the Latest Successor to Lewis Carroll, of "Alice in Wonderland" Fame and Other Wise Men Who Relished "A Little Nonsense Now and Then."



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A Social Lobster.

The Lobster's home is in the Sea;
It is as humble as may be.
But he has wandered far afield,
And now his presence is revealed
Within our best Society.
This Lesson to us all is sent
To lend us due Encouragement.



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The Gazelle.

I never loved a fond Gazelle
But it would jump and snort and yell.



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My Crocodile.

My Crocodile is good to me—
He is as nice as he can be;
But when I go out for a ride
I'd rather not come back inside.



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Squidgumsquees.

The Cats catch Mice and the Goblins chase the Elves,
But the Squidgumsquees they swallow themselves.



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The Giraffe.

If the Giraffe were not so tall
He'd be an Awful Cannibal,
But just before he goes to bed
He sits awhile upon his head.

DR. DAVID STARR JORDAN, the solemn and dignified president of Stanford University, has written a book of nonsense rhymes called "Eric's Book of Beasts."

He has also drawn the pictures that go with the rhymes. Some of the most amusing examples of the college president's work are given on this page.

"How very undignified of President Jordan to write a book like that!" some saucy person may say. Not at all. The more a man's brain is burdened with solemn and difficult things, the more he needs humorous relaxation. Moreover, the more learned he is, the more perfect nonsense he can write.

The ability of a learned man to write perfect nonsense—in the best sense—was never better illustrated than by the case of Lewis Carroll, who is generally conceded to be the most perfect writer of nonsense that ever lived.

Lewis Carroll, who was in private life the Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, was a tutor at the University of Oxford, a mathematician of great ability, a philologist, a classical scholar and a man of remarkable attainments in many branches of learning.

He once undertook to prove by the rules of algebra and trigonometry that his work was perfect nonsense. He defied anybody to find any sense in it. He proved his case brilliantly.

As an example of the possibilities of using scholarship to produce nonsense we may take the first stanza of Lewis Carroll's most immortal poem, "Jabberwocky."

"Twas brillig and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe.
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths out-grabe."

Now every peculiar word in this stanza is built up from Anglo-Saxon roots, and put together according to the rules of comparative philology, but every rule has been exactly re-



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Little Children.

Little children at their play,
Happy, scrappy all the day.



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The 'Potamus.

My little 'Potamus and I
Walk hand in hand when roads are dry,
But when the clouds begin to rain
I creep into his mouth again.

versed in its application. It would have been impossible to write that wonderful stanza without devoting years to the study of Anglo-Saxon and comparative philology. Lewis Carroll was a master of both these subjects.

Here is another delightful little piece of nonsense by Lewis Carroll, that is remarkable for its metrical daintiness:

"She has the bear's ethereal grace,
The bland hyena's laugh,
The footstep of the elephant,
The neck of the giraffe.
I love her still, believe me,
Though my heart its passion hides.
She is all my fancy painted her,
But, oh, how much I miss her!"

President Jordan, of Stanford University, is like Lewis Carroll, a man of great attainments in many branches of learning. He is the author of thirty scientific works and of five hundred scientific papers and magazine articles. It may have been the learning, which he displays in his "Manual of Vertebrates," that enabled him to describe "The Mitgard Serpient" in the entertaining verse printed elsewhere on this page.

Many other men have demonstrated that you have to know a great deal before you can write interesting nonsense. Before the time of Lewis Carroll the most entertaining writer of nonsense rhymes was Edward Lear, who was born in 1812 and died in 1888.

He was the father of modern nonsense writers. Lear was a very brilliant naturalist and illustrator of books upon natural history. The knowledge that he showed in his principal work, "Illustrations of the Family of the Pelecanidae," helped him to write his "Book of Nonsense" for children and humorous books.

Only a scientist could imagine the romance that might be built on the hopeless love of an irregular polygon, for the absolute symmetry of an isosceles triangle.

The man who understands the basis of things is best able to turn them upside down.



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Mitgard Serpient.

It was the Mitgard Serpient,
He grabbed the Earth and away he went;
(The Mitgard Serpient was a Cat,
With a dozen legs, or about like that).
He swallowed his tail with all his might,
Then spit on his claws and held on tight;
And so the world went round all right,
And 'twas sometimes day and sometimes night,
And 'twas always dark when it wasn't light.



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A Hospitable Reptile.

This Reptile is a hardened sinner,
But when a friend drops in for dinner
He greets him with an open smile,
And makes him merry quite a while.
O let us, like this reptile, be
Renowned for Hospitality!



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The Caravan.

Van! Van! Caravan!
Who is the camel and which is the man?

Why You Ought to Kiss Only a Clean-Shaven Man

Paris, April 19.
SHOULD a girl kiss a clean-shaven or a whiskered man, if any?

This very delicate yet vitally important question has been answered scientifically and definitely by a distinguished Professor of the Paris Academy of Medicine.

His experiment proves that it is just one hundred times as dangerous from a pathological point of view to kiss a mustached or whiskered man as a clean-shaven one.

Professor Durand decided that this question, which has been much discussed in a loose way, ought to be settled scientifically. He secured the services of a young and healthy woman, who was willing to submit to the experiment for the sake of science, and a couple of doctors of his staff.

The young woman was first thoroughly sterilized. All the billions and billions of germs that lurked in her lips, eyes, hair and other external parts of her organism were completely destroyed. She was then locked up in a germ proof room, in the professor's laboratory, used in

bacteriological experiments. Elaborate precautions were taken to guard the feminine culture-medium against contamination during the absence of the professor.

Of the two doctors one was clean shaven, while the other wore the round, fuzzy beard and mustache, which have become traditional among French medical men. The professor took his two assistants out for a walk among the microbes and bacteria of Paris.

He took them for a walk along the grand boulevards, the resort of the gayest Parisian butterflies of both sexes. He led them through a great department store near the Louvre, which was filled with women representing every class of Parisian society. Then he took them through the Louvre itself, which happened to contain at the moment a fine assortment of artists.

He steered them through Halles Centrales, the markets which feed practically the whole of Paris. He allowed them to jostle a crowd of factory girls coming out for lunch.

Finally he led them back, microbe laden, to his laboratory. First he ordered the clean-shaven doctor to go in and kiss the culture-medium

firmly and closely for two minutes. The professor held his stop-watch to see that the period was not exceeded.

When the kissing had been completed, the professor brushed off the young culture-medium's lips and

allowed the invisible flora that hung there to drop into a Petri dish designed to hold microbes. Then he

thoroughly sterilized the culture, medium's lips.

Now it was the turn of the whiskered doctor. He was ordered to go in and kiss the sterilized subject in the same manner for the same period as the other man. Once more the professor brushed off the culture-medium's lips and collected the bacterial harvest in a second Petri dish.

Then the professor made a careful study of the two dishes. He estimated that the space kissed amounted to two square inches. From the dish used to collect the offspring of the clean-shaven man's kiss, he counted 80,000 microbes, which is practically nothing, when we consider the enormous prevalence of microbes in our common surroundings. The few dangerous microbes among them were present in such small quantities that they would hardly have hurt any one.

Next he examined the crop collected after the whiskered man's kiss. In this he found upwards of 80,000,000 microbes of all kinds, or about one hundred times as much as the clean-shaven man's kiss yielded. Among them were about 20,000,000 germs of tuberculosis, 10,000,000

germs of typhoid, 5,000,000 germs of diphtheria, 1,000,000 germs of whooping cough, 1,000,000 germs of measles and 500,000 germs of scarlet fever.

It is well recognized that a heavy load of bacterial infection is usually needed to convey a disease. The infection of the whiskered man's disease was dangerous to a point that under predisposing conditions would be likely to result fatally.

The clean-shaven man's kiss, on the other hand, was so lightly charged with infection that it was practically innocuous.

The bacterial crop from the whiskered man's kiss, after it had been allowed to grow for four days in a highly nutritious culture-medium, had increased to a mass of deadly germs, which if let loose might have destroyed the entire population of Paris.

The result of cultivating the bacterial crop from the clean-shaven man's kiss was very different. From the starting point the harmless microbes predominated so greatly over the harmful ones that during the process of intensive cultivation they entirely crowded the deadly ones out of existence.



But This Is the Only Safe Way to Kiss After All—Through One of the New Antiseptic Screens.